

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA**

SOUTHERN NAZARENE
UNIVERSITY, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

ALEX M. AZAR II, *et al.*,

Defendants.

No. 5:13-cv-1015-F

**DEFENDANTS' RESPONSE TO PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR
PERMANENT INJUNCTION AND DECLARATORY RELIEF**

Plaintiffs have moved for a permanent injunction and declaratory relief against federal regulations that required them to offer coverage of contraceptive services (“the Mandate”) or to comply with an accommodation process whereby their employees and students would receive coverage through Plaintiffs’ health insurance issuers or third party administrators. *See* ECF No. 105. Although the Government does not agree with all of the statements and arguments in Plaintiffs’ motion for permanent injunction, the Government is not raising a substantive defense of the Mandate or the accommodation process with respect to Plaintiffs’ Religious Freedom Restoration Act (“RFRA”) challenge. The Government has concluded that requiring employers with sincerely held religious objections to comply with the Mandate or the accommodation process would violate RFRA.

The Government takes no position on whether permanent injunctive relief or declaratory relief is appropriate in this case. The injunctions in *Pennsylvania v. Trump*, No. 2:17-cv-04540-WB, 2017 WL 6398465 (E.D. Pa. Dec. 15, 2017), and *California v. Department of Health and Human Services*, No. 4:17-cv-05783-HSG, ECF No. 105 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 21, 2017), do not purport to interfere with this case or other existing litigation challenging the prior rules. *See Pennsylvania*, 2017 WL 6398465, at *21 (“A preliminary injunction will maintain the status quo: those with exemptions or accommodations prior to October 6, 2017 will maintain their status, those with injunctions preventing enforcement of the Contraceptive Mandate will maintain their injunctions, but those with coverage will maintain their coverage as well.”); Order Granting Plaintiffs’ Motion for A Preliminary Injunction at 29, *California*, No. 17-05783, ECF No. 105 (“This nationwide injunction does not conflict with the plaintiff-specific injunctions issued by the courts in the Zubik cases or any other case.”).

Respectfully submitted this 7th day of May, 2018,

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/s/ Michelle R. Bennett
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on May 7, 2018, I electronically filed a copy of the foregoing. Notice of this filing will be sent via email to all parties by operation of the Court's electronic filing system. Parties may access this filing through the Court's CM/ECF System.

/s/ Michelle R. Bennett
MICHELLE R. BENNETT